

A
W O R D
OF REMEMBRANCE
AND
CAUTION
TO THE
R I C H.

BY JOHN WOOLMAN, of *Mount-holly,*
in *New-Jersey,* who died in the Year 1772.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED BY T. M. BATES,
'For R. M. JACKSON. 1793.



A
W O R D
O F
REMEMBRANCE, &c.

CHAP. I.

WEALTH, desired for its own
fake, obstructs the increase of virtue;
and large possessions, in the hands of
selfish men, have a bad tendency;
for, by their means, too small a num-
ber of people are employed in useful
things;

things; and some of them are necessitated to labour too hard, while others would want business to earn their bread; were not employments invented, which, having no real usefulness, serve only to please the vain mind.

Rents set on lands, are often so high, that persons of but small substance are straitened in taking farms, and while tenants are healthy and prosperous in business, they often find occasion to labour harder, than was intended by our gracious Creator.

Oxen and horses are often seen at work, when through heat, and too much labour, their eyes, and the emotions

tions of their bodies, manifest they are oppressed. Their loads in wag-gons are frequently so heavy, that when weary with haling them far, their drivers find occasion in going up hills, or through mires, to raise their spirits, by whipping, to get forward. Many poor people are so thronged in their business, that it is difficult for them to provide shelter for their cattle, against the storms. These things are common, when in health; but through sickness and inability to labour; through loss of cattle, and miscarriage in business, many are so straitened; so much of their increase goes to pay rent, that they have not wherewith to buy what their case requires.

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Hence,

Hence, one poor woman, intending on her children, providing for her family, and keeping the sick, does as much business as would for the time be suitable employment for two or three; and honest persons are often straitened, to give their children suitable learning. The money which the wealthy receive from the poor, who do more than a proper share of business in raising it, is frequently paid to other poor people, for doing business, which is foreign to the true use of things. Men who have large estates, and live in the spirit of charity; who carefully inspect the circumstances of those, who occupy their estates, and, regardless of the customs of the times, regulate their demands agreeably to
universal

universal love, by being righteous on principle, do good to the poor, without placing it to an act of bounty.

Their example, in avoiding superfluities, tends to excite moderation in others; their uprightness, in not exacting what the laws and customs would support them in, tends to open the channel to moderate labour in useful affairs, and to discourage those branches of business which have not their foundation in true wisdom,

To be busied in that which is but vanity, and serves only to please the insatiable mind, tends to an alliance with those who promote that vanity, and is a snare, in which many poor tradesmen are entangled. To

To be employed in things connected with virtue, is most agreeable with the character and inclinations of an honest man.

While industrious frugal people are borne down with poverty, and oppressed with too much labour in useful things, the way to apply money, without promoting pride and vanity, remains open to such, as truly sympathise with them, in their various difficulties.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Creator of the earth is the owner of it: He gave us being thereon, and our nature requires nourishment, which is the produce of it. As he is kind and merciful to his creatures, while they live answerably to the design of their creation, they are so far entitled to convenient subsistence, that we may not justly deprive them of it. By the agreements and contracts of our fathers and predecessors, and by doings and proceedings of our own, some enjoy a much greater share of this world, than others; and while those possessions are
faithfully

faithfully improved to the good of the whole, it consists with equity: but he, who, with a view to self-exaltation, causeth some with their domestic animals to labour immoderately, and, with the monies arising to him therefrom, employs others in the luxuries of life, acts contrary to the gracious designs of him who is the true owner of the earth; nor can any possessions, either acquired or derived from ancestors, justify such conduct. Goodness remains to be goodness, and the direction of pure wisdom is obligatory on all reasonable creatures.

Though the poor occupy our estates by a bargain, to which they in their poor circumstances agree; and we ask
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even less than a punctual fulfilling of their agreement; yet, if our views are to lay up riches; or to live in conformity to customs which have not their foundation in the truth, and our demands are such as require greater toil or application to business in them, than is consistent with pure love, we invade their rights, as inhabitants of that world, of which a good and gracious God is proprietor, under whom we are tenants,

Were all superfluities, and the desire of outward greatness laid aside, and the right use of things universally attended to, such a number of people might be employed in things useful, as that moderate labour, with the blessing

King of Heaven, would answer all good purposes relating to people and their cattle, and a sufficient number have time to attend on the proper affairs of civil society.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

While our spirits are cheerful and lively, we go cheerfully through business; either too much or too little action is tiresome; but a right portion is healthful to our bodies, and agreeable to an honest mind,

Where men have great estates, they stand in a place of trust: to have it in their power without difficulty, to live in that fashion which occasions much labour, and at the same time, confine themselves to that use of things prescribed by our Redeemer, and confirmed by his example, and
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the examples of many who lived in the early age of the Christian church, that they may more extensively relieve objects of charity; for men who have great estates, to live thus, requires close attention to divine love.

Our gracious Creator, cares and provides for all his creatures: his tender mercies are over all his works, and so far as true love influences our minds, so far we become interested in his workmanship; and feel a desire to make use of every opportunity to lessen the distresses of the afflicted, and encrease the happiness of the creation. Here we have a prospect of one common interest from which
our

our own is inseparable, so that to turn all we possess, into the channel of universal love, becomes the business of our lives.

Men of large estates whose hearts are thus enlarged, are like fathers to the poor; and in looking over their brethren in distressed circumstances, and considering their own more easy condition, they find a field for humble meditation, and feel the strength of those obligations they are under, to be kind and tender-hearted toward them. Poor men eased of their burdens, and released from too close an application to business, are enabled, to hire assistance, to provide well for their cattle, and find time to perform

perform those duties amongst their neighbours, which belong to a well guided social life. When these reflect on the opportunity those had to oppress them, and consider the goodness of their conduct, they behold it lovely and consistent with brotherhood ; and, as the man whose mind is conformed to universal love, hath his trust settled in God, and finds a firm foundation to stand upon, in any changes or revolutions that happen amongst men, so also, the goodness of his conduct tends to spread a kind benevolent disposition in the world.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Our blessed Redeemer, in directing us how to conduct ourselves one towards another, appeals to our own feelings. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Now where some live in fulness on the labour of others, who have never had experience of hard labour themselves, there is often a danger of their not having a right feeling of the labourer's condition, and therefore of being disqualified to judge candidly in their case, not knowing what they themselves would desire, were they to labour hard
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from one year to another, to raise the necessaries of life, and pay high rent besides. It is good for those who live in fulness, to labour for tenderness of heart, and improve every opportunity of being acquainted with the hardships and fatigues of those who labour for their living, and think seriously with themselves; Am I influenced by true charity in fixing all my demands? Have I no desire to support myself in expensive customs, because my acquaintances live in those customs?

Were I to labour, as they do, toward supporting them and their children in a station like mine, in such sort as they and their children labour

labour for us, could I not on such a change, before I entered into agreements of rent or interest, name some costly articles now used by me, or in my family, which have no real use in them, the expense whereof might be lessened: and should I not in such case, strongly desire the disuse of those needless articles, that, less answering their way of life, the terms might be easier to me?

If a wealthy man, on serious reflection, finds a witness in his own conscience, that there are some expenses which he indulgeth himself in, that are in conformity to customs which might be omitted,
consistent

consistent with the true design of living, and which, was he to change places with those who occupy his estate, he would desire to be discontinued by them; whoever are thus awakened to these feelings, will necessarily find the injunction binding, "Do thou even so to them."

Divine Love imposeth no rigorous or unreasonable commands; but graciously points out the spirit of brotherhood and the way to happiness, in attaining to which, it is necessary, that we go forth out of all that is selfish.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

To pass through a series of hardships, and to languish under oppression, brings people to a certain knowledge of those things. To enforce the duty of tenderness to the poor, the inspired law-giver referred the children of Israel to their own past experience; "Ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." He who hath been a stranger amongst unkind people, or under their government who were hard-hearted, knows how it feels; but a person who hath never felt the weight of misapplied power,
comes

comes not to this knowledge, but by an inward tenderneſs, in which the heart is prepared to ſympathiſe with others.

We may reflect on the condition of a poor innocent man, who, by his labour, contributes towards ſupporting one of his own ſpecies, more wealthy than himſelf, on whom the rich man, from a deſire after wealth and luxuries, lays heavy burdens: when this labourer looks over the cauſe of his heavy load, and conſiders, that this great toil and fatigue is laid on him to ſupport that which hath no foundation in pure wiſdom, we may well ſuppoſe, that there ariſeth an uneaſineſs in his mind
towards

towards one who might, without any inconvenience, deal more favourably with him: when he considers, that, by his industry, his fellow-creature is benefited, and sees that this man, who hath wealth, is not satisfied with being supported in a plain way; but, to gratify a wrong desire, and conform to wrong customs, encreaseth to an extreme, the labours of those, who occupy his estate; we may reasonably judge, that he will think himself unkindly used. When he considers, that the proceedings of the wealthy are agreeable to the customs of the times, and sees no means of redress in this world; how would the sighings of this innocent person ascend the

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throne

throne of that great, good Being, who created us all, and hath a constant care over his creatures. By candidly considering these things, we may have some sense of the condition of innocent people, over-loaded by the wealthy, but he who toils, one year after another, to furnish others with wealth and superfluities; who labours and thinks, and thinks and labours; until, by overmuch labour, he is wearied and oppressed: such an one understands the meaning of that language; "Ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." As many at this day, who know not the heart of a stranger, indulge

indulge themselves in ways of life, which occasion more labour than infinite goodness intends for man, and yet are compassionate for such in distress, as come directly under their observation; were these to change circumstances awhile, with some who labour for them; were they to pass regularly, through the means of knowing the heart of a stranger, and come to a feeling knowledge of the straits and hardships which many poor innocent people pass through, in a hidden obscure life; were these who now fare sumptuously every day, to act the other part of the scene, until seven times had passed over them, and return again

to their former estates; I believe many of them would embrace a life less expensive, and lighten the heavy burdens of some, who now labour out of their sight, and pass through straits with which they are but little acquainted. To see our fellow-creatures under difficulties, to which we are in no degree accessory, tends to awaken tenderness in the minds of all reasonable people; but if we consider the condition of those, who are depressed in answering our demands, who labour out of our sight, and are often toiling for us, while we pass our time in fulness; and consider also, that much less than we demand, would supply us with things really

really useful; what heart will not relent, or what reasonable man can refrain from mitigating that grief, which he himself is the cause of, when he may do it without inconvenience?

CHAP. VI.

People, spent with much labour, often take strong liquor to revive them. The portion of the necessities of life, answerable to a day's work, is such, that those who support their families by daylabour, find occasion to labour hard, and many of them think strong drink a necessary part of their entertainment.

Were there more men usefully employed, and fewer who eat bread as a reward for doing that which is not useful, then food and raiment would, on a reasonable estimate, be
more

more in proportion to labour, than what it is at present; for, if four men working eight hours in the day, can do any portion of labour, in a certain number of days; then five men, equally capable, may do the same business, in the same time, and work only six hours and twenty-four minutes in the day. In proceeding agreeably to sound wisdom, a small portion of daily labour might suffice, to keep a proper stream, gently circulating, through all the channels of society; and this portion of labour, might be so divided, and taken in the most advantageous parts of the day, that people would not have that plea, for the use of strong liquors, which they have at present. The quantity of
 spirituous

spirituous liquors imported and made in our country, is great; nor can so many thousand hogshheads of this liquor, be drank every year in our country, without having a powerful effect on our manners.

When people are spent with action, and take these liquors, not only as a refreshment from past labours, but also to support them to go on, without nature having a sufficient time to recruit, by resting; it gradually turns them from that calmness of thought, which attends those who apply their hearts to true wisdom. That the spirits being scattered by too much bodily motion, and again revived by strong drink makes a person

person unfit for divine meditation, I suppose will not be denied; and as multitudes of people are in this practice, who do not take so much as to hinder them from managing their affairs, this custom is strongly supported; but as, through divine goodness, I have found that there is a more quiet, calm and happy way, intended for us to walk in, I am engaged to express what I feel in my heart concerning it. As cherishing the spirit of love and meekness, belongs to the family of Jesus Christ; so, to avoid those things, which they know work against it; is an indispensable duty. Every degree of luxury, of what kind soever, and every demand for money inconsistent with
divine

divine order, hath some connexion with unnecessary labour. By too much labour the spirits are exhausted; and nature craves help from strong drink; and the frequent use of strong drink, works in opposition to the celestial influence on the mind.

This is plain when men take so much, as to suspend the use of their reason; and though there are degrees of this opposition, and a man quite drunk may be furthest removed from that frame of mind, in which God is worshipped; yet a person being often nearly spent with too much action, and revived by spirituous liquors, without being quite drunk, inures

inures himself to that which is a less degree of the same thing; and by long continuance thereof, must necessarily hurt both mind and body. There is in the nature of people, some degree of likeness with that food and air, to which they, from their youth, have been accustomed: this frequently appears in those, who, by a separation from their native air and usual diet, grow weak and unhealthy for want of them; nor is it reasonable to suppose, that so many thousand hogshheads of this fiery liquor can be drunk by us every year, and the practice continued from age to age, without altering, in some degree, the natures of men, and rendering their
minds

minds less apt to receive the pure truth in the love of it.

As many, who manifest some regard to piety, do yet, in degree, conform to those ways of living, and of collecting wealth, which encrease labour beyond the bounds fixed by divine wisdom; my desire is, that they may so consider the connexion of things, as to take heed, lest by exacting of poor men, more than is consistent with universal righteousness, they promote that, by their conduct, which in word they speak against. To treasure up wealth for another generation, by means of the immoderate labour of those, who in
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some measure depend upon us, is doing evil at present, without knowing, but what our wealth, thus gathered, may be applied to evil purposes, when we are gone. To labour hard, or cause others to do so, that we may live conformably to customs, which Christ our Redeemer contradicted by his example in the days of his flesh, and which are contrary to divine order, is to manure a soil, for propagating an evil seed in the earth.

They who enter deep into these considerations, and live under the weight of them, will feel these things so heavy, and their ill effects so extensive, that the necessity of attending singly to divine wisdom, will be

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evident;

evident; thereby to be directed in the right use of things, in opposition to the customs of the times, and will be supported to bear patiently the reproaches attending singularity. To conform a little to a wrong way, strengthens the hands of those, who carry wrong customs to their utmost extent, and the more a person appears to be virtuous, and heavenly-minded, the more powerfully does his conformity operate, in favour of evil doers. Lay aside the profession of a pious life, and people expect little or no instruction from the example; but while we profess, in all cases, to live in constant opposition to that which is contrary to universal righteousness;—What expressions
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are equal to the subject? or what language is sufficient to set forth the strength of those obligations we are under, to beware, lest, by our example, we lead others wrong?

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CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

In the care of our children, we may give way to partiality, in things relating to what may be when we are gone; yet after death, we cannot look on partiality with pleasure.

If by our wealth, we make them great, without a full persuasion that we could not bestow it better, and thus give them power to deal hardly with others, more virtuous than they, it can, after death, give us no more satisfaction, than if by this treasure we had raised these others above our own, and given them power to oppress them. Did

Did a man possess as much good land, as would well suffice for twenty industrious frugal people, and supposing that he was lawful heir to it, intended to give this great estate to his children, but found, on research into the title, that one-half of this estate was the undoubted right of a number of poor orphans, who, as to virtue and understanding, to him appeared as hopeful as his own children; this discovery would give him an opportunity to consider, whether he was attached to any interest distinct from the interest of those orphans.

Some of us have estates sufficient for our children, and as many more,

to live upon, did they all employ their time in useful business, and live in that plainness consistent with the character of true disciples of Christ; and have no reason to believe, that our children after us, will apply them to benevolent purposes, more than some poor children whom we are acquainted with, would, if they had them; and yet, did we believe that after our decease, these estates would go equally among our children, and an equal number of those poor children, it would be likely to give us uneasiness.

This may shew to a thoughtful person, that, to be redeemed from all the remains of selfishness;
to

to have an universal regard to our fellow-creatures, and love them as our heavenly father loves them, we must constantly attend to the influence of his spirit.

When our hearts are enlarged to contemplate the nature of this divine love, we behold it harmonious; but if we attentively consider that moving of selfishness, which would make us uneasy at the apprehension of that, which is in itself reasonable, and which, being separated from all previous conceptions and expectations, will appear so, we may see an inconsistency in it; for, the subject of such uneasiness is in future, and will not affect our children, until we are removed

moved into that state of being where there is no possibility of our taking delight in any thing contrary to the pure principle of universal love.

As that natural desire of superiority in us, being given way to, extends to such of our favourites, who we expect will succeed us; and, as the grasping after wealth and power for them, adds greatly to the burdens of the poor, and encreaseth the evil of covetousness in this age; I have often desired in secret, that, in looking toward posterity, we may remember the purity of that rest, which is prepared for the Lord's people; the impossibility of our taking pleasure in any thing distinguish-
able

able from universal righteousness; and how vain and weak a thing it is, to give wealth and power to those, who appear unlikely to apply it to a general good when we are gone.

As christians, all we possess are the gifts of God to us; now in distributing it to others, we act as his stewards; and it becomes our station, to act agreeably to that divine wisdom, which he graciously gives to his servants.

If the steward of a great family, from a selfish attachment to particulars, takes that with which he is entrusted, and bestows it lavishly on some, to the injury of others, and

to the damage of him who employs him, he degrades himself, and becomes unworthy of that office.

The true felicity of man in this life, and that which is to come, is in being inwardly united to the fountain of universal love and bliss. When we provide for posterity, and make settlements, which will not take effect, until after we are centered in another state of being; if we therein, knowingly act contrary to universal love and righteousness, such conduct must arise from a false, selfish pleasure; and if we, after such settlement, and when too late for an alteration, attain to that purified state which our Redeemer prayed his father,

ther,

ther, that his people might attain to, of being united to the Father, and to the Son; must not a sincere repentance, for all things done in a will separate from universal love, precede this inward sanctification? and though in such depth of repentance and reconciliation, all sins are forgiven, can we reasonably suppose, that our partial determinations, in favour of those whom we loved, in a selfish love, will then afford us pleasure? and if, after such selfish settlements, our wills continue to stand, in opposition to the fountain of universal light and love; will there not be an unpassable gulph between the soul and true felicity?

C H A P.

CHAP. VIII.

To labour for an establishment in divine love, where the mind is dis-entangled from the power of darkness, is the great business of man's life; the collecting of riches, covering the body with fine wrought, costly apparel, and having magnificent furniture, operate against universal love, and tend to feed self; so that it belongs not to the children of the light to desire those things.

He who sent ravens to feed Elijah in the wilderness, and increased the poor woman's small remains of meal
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and oil, is now as attentive to the necessities of his people as ever.

When he saith unto his people, "ye are my sons and daughters," no greater happiness can be desired by them, who know how gracious a father he is.

The greater part of the necessities of life, are so far perishable, that each generation hath occasion to labour for them : and when we look toward a succeeding age, with a mind influenced with universal love, instead of endeavouring to exempt some from those cares, which necessarily relate to this life, and give them power to oppress others; we desire,
that

that they may all be the Lord's children, and live in that humility, and order, becoming his family. Our hearts being thus opened, and enlarged, we feel content in a use of things, as foreign to luxury and grandeur, as that, which our redeemer laid down as a pattern.

By desiring wealth for the power and distinction it gives, and gathering it on this motive, a person may become rich; but his mind, herein, being moved, by a draught distinguishable from the drawings of the Father, he cannot be united to the heavenly society, where God is the strength of their life.

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“ It is easier,” saith our Saviour,
 “ for a camel to go through the
 eye of a needle, than for a rich
 man to enter into the kingdom of
 God.” Here, our Lord uses an in-
 structive similitude, for, as a camel,
 while in that form, cannot pass
 through the eye of a needle, so a
 man, who trusteth in riches, and
 holds them, for the sake of the
 power and distinction attending them,
 cannot, in that spirit, enter into the
 kingdom. Now, every part of a ca-
 mel may be so reduced, as to pass
 through a hole, as small as the eye
 of a needle; yet, such is the bulk
 of the creature, and the hardness of
 its bones, and teeth, that, it could
 not be completed, without much
 labour

labour; so man must cease from that spirit, which craves riches, and be reduced into another disposition, before he inherits the kingdom; as effectually as a camel must be changed, from the form of a camel, in passing through the eye of a needle.

When our Saviour said to the rich youth, "Go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor;" though undoubtedly it was his duty to have done so, yet, to enjoin this, of selling all, as a duty on every true christian, would be to limit the Holy One.

Obedient children, who are intrusted with much outward substance, wait for wisdom to dispose of it agreeably

agreeably to his will, "in whom, the fatherless find mercy." It may not be the duty of every one to commit, at once, their substance to other hands; but rather, from time to time, to look round amongst the numerous branches of the great family, as the steward of him, who provides for the widows and the fatherless, and as disciples of Christ, however entrusted with much goods, they may not conform to sumptuous or luxurious living; for, as he lived in perfect plainness and simplicity, the greatest in his family cannot, by virtue of his station, claim a right to live in worldly grandeur, without contradicting his doctrine, who

who said, "It is enough for the disciple to be as his master."

When our eyes are so single, as to discern the selfish spirit clearly, we behold it the greatest of all tyrants. Many thousand innocent people, under some of the Roman emperors, being confirmed in the truth of Christ's religion, from the powerful effects of his holy spirit upon them, and scrupling to conform to heathenish rites, were therefore, by various kinds of cruel and lingering torments, put to death, as is largely set forth by Eusebius.

Now if we single out Domitian, Nero, or any other of the persecuting emperors, the man, though terrible
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in his time, will appear as a tyrant of small consequence, compared with this selfish spirit; for, though his bounds were large, yet a great part of the world was out of his reach; and though he grievously afflicted the bodies of those innocent people, yet the minds of many were divinely supported in their greatest agonies; and being faithful unto death, were delivered from his tyranny.

His reign, though cruel for a time, was soon over; and he, considered in his greatest pomp, appears to have been a slave to a selfish spirit. Thus tyranny, as applied to a man, riseth up, and soon has an end; but if we consider the numerous oppressions in
many

many states, and the calamities occasioned, by nation contending with nation, in various parts and ages of the world, and remember that selfishness hath been the original cause of them all; if we consider that those who are unredeemed from this selfish spirit, not only afflict others, but are afflicted themselves, and have no real quietness in this life, nor in futurity; but, according to the sayings of Christ, have their portion in that painful condition, "Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched;" If we consider the havock that is made in this age, and how numbers of the people are hurried on, striving to collect

lect treasure to please that mind which wanders from perfect resignedness; and, in that wisdom which is foolishness with God, are perverting the true use of things, labouring as in the fire, contending with one another, even unto blood, and exerting their power to support ways of living, foreign to the life of one, wholly crucified to the world.

If we consider what great numbers of people are employed preparing the articles of war, and the labour and toil of armies, set apart for protecting their respective territories from the incursions of war; and the extensive miseries which attend their engagements; while they who till the land,
and

and are employed in other useful things, in supporting themselves, supporting those employed in military affairs, and also those who own the soil, have great hardships to encounter, through too much labour; while others, in several kingdoms, are busied in fetching men to help to labour, from distant parts of the world, to spend the remainder of their lives in the uncomfortable condition of slaves; and that self is the bottom of these proceedings: amidst all this confusion, and these scenes of sorrow and distress, can we remember the prince of peace, remember that we are his disciples, and remember that example of humility and plainness, which he set for us, without feeling an earnest desire to be disentangled

disentangled from every thing connected with selfish customs, in food, in raiment, in houses, and all things else? that, being of Christ's family, and, walking as he walked, we may stand in that uprightness, wherein man was first made, and have no fellowship with those inventions, which men in their fallen wisdom, have sought out.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The way of carrying on wars, common in the world, is so far distinguishable from the purity of Christ's religion, that many scruple to join in them. Those who are so redeemed from the love of the world, as to possess nothing in a selfish spirit, their "life is hid with Christ in God," and these he preserves in resignedness, even in times of commotion.

As they possess nothing but what pertains to his family, anxious thoughts about wealth or dominion have little or nothing in them to work

work upon; and they learn contentment in being disposed of according to his will, who being omnipotent, and always mindful of his children, causeth all things to work for their good: but where that spirit works which loves riches, and, in its working, gathers wealth and cleaves to customs which have their root in self-pleasing: and whatever name it hath, it still desires to defend the treasures thus gotten:—This is like a chain where the end of one link encloses the end of the other; the rising up of a desire to obtain wealth, is the beginning; this desire being cherished, moves to action, and riches thus gotten, please self, and while self has a life in them, it desires to have

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them

them defended. Wealth is attended with power, by which, bargains and proceedings contrary to universal righteousness are supported; and here oppression, carried on with worldly policy and order, clothes itself with the name of justice, and becomes like a seed of discord in the soul: and as a spirit which wanders from the pure habitation prevails, so the seeds of war swell and sprout, and grow, and become strong, untill much fruit is ripened.

Thus cometh the harvest spoken of by the prophet which "is a heap, in the day of grief and desperate sorrows." Oh! that we, who declare against wars, and acknowledge our trust to be

be in God only, may walk in the light, and therein examine our foundation and motives in holding great estates! May we look upon our treasures, and the furniture of our houses, and the garments in which we array ourselves, and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions, or not. Holding treasures in the self-pleasing spirit is a strong plant, the fruit whereof ripens fast,

A day of outward distress is coming, and divine love calls to prepare against it.

CHAP. X.

“ The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord’s; but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” As servants of God, what land or estates we hold, we hold under him as his gifts; and in applying the profits, it is our duty to act consistently with the designs of our benefactor. Imperfect men may give, on motives of misguided affection, but perfect wisdom and goodness, gives agreeably to his own nature, nor is this gift absolute, but conditional, for us to occupy as dutiful children, and not otherwise; for he alone is the true proprietor. “ The world

world," saith he, "is mine, and the fulness thereof." The inspired law-giver directed, that such of the Israelites as sold their inheritance, should sell it for a term only; and that they or their children, should again enjoy it in the year of jubilee, settled on every fiftieth year. "The land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is mine, saith the lord, for ye are strangers, and sojourners with me." The design of which was, to prevent the rich from oppressing the poor, by too much engrossing the land; and our blessed Redeemer said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled."

Where divine love takes place in the hearts of any people, and they steadily act in a principle of universal righteousness, there the true intent of the law is fulfilled, though their outward modes of proceeding may be distinguishable from one another; but when men are possessed by that spirit, hinted at by the prophet, and looking over their wealth, say in their hearts, "Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength." Here they deviate from the divine law, and do not count their possessions so strictly God's, nor the weak and poor entitled to so much of the increase thereof, but that they may indulge their desires, in conforming to worldly pomp.

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Thus where house is joined to house, and field laid to field, untill there is no place, and the poor are thereby straitened, though this is done by bargain and purchase, yet so far as it stands distinguished from universal love, so far that woe, prefixed by the prophet, will accompany their proceedings. As he who first founded the earth out of nothing, was then the true proprietor of it, so he still remains, and though he hath given it to the children of men, so that multitudes of people have had sustenance from it, while they continued here; yet he hath never alienated it, but his right is as good as at first, nor can any apply the increase of their possessions
contrary

contrary to universal love, nor dispose of lands in a way, which they know tends to exalt some, by oppressing others; without being justly chargeable with usurpation.

CHAP.

C H A P. XI.

If we count back one hundred and fifty years, and compare the inhabitants of Great-Britain, with nations of North America, on the like compass of ground, the latter I suppose, would bear a small proportion to the others. On the discovery of this fertile continent, many of those thick settled inhabitants coming over, the natives generally treated them with kindness, at first; and as those brought iron tools, and a variety of things for man's use, they gladly embraced the opportunity of traffick, and encouraged those

those foreigners to settle: I speak only of improvements made peaceably.

Thus our gracious father, who at the same time beholds the situation of all his creatures, hath opened a way for a thick settled land; now if we consider the turning of God's hand, in thus far giving us some room in this continent, and that the offspring of those ancient possessors of the country, in whose eyes we appear as newcomers, are yet owners and inhabitants of the land adjoining us, and that their way of life, requiring much room, hath been transmitted to them from their predecessors, and probably settled by the custom of a great many ages: under these considerations,

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we may see the necessity of cultivating the lands already obtained of them, and applying the increase consistently with true wisdom, so as to accommodate the greatest number of people it is capable of, before we have any right to plead, as members of the one great family, the equity of their assigning to us more of their possessions, and living in a way requiring less room.

Did we all walk as became the followers of our blessed Saviour; were all the fruits of the country retained in it, which are sent abroad, in return for such strong drink, such costly array, and other luxuries, which we should then have no use for; and the labour
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and expense of importing and exporting applied to husbandry, and useful trades, a much greater number of people than now reside here, might, with the divine blessing, live comfortably on the lands already granted us, by those ancient possessors of the country.

If we faithfully serve God, who has given us some room in this land, I believe he will make some of us useful amongst them, both in publishing the doctrines of His Son, our Saviour, and in pointing out to them, the advantages of cultivating the earth; while people are so much thicker settled, in some parts, than others, a trade in some serviceable articles, may
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be to mutual advantage, and carried on with much more regularity and satisfaction to a sincere christian, than the trade now generally is.

One person continuing to live contrary to true wisdom, commonly draws others into connection with him, and where these embrace the way this first hath chosen, their proceedings are like a wild vine, which, springing from a single seed, and growing strong, its branches extend, and their little turning holders, twist round all herbs and boughs of trees where they reach; and are so braced and locked in, that, without much labour and great strength, they are not disentangled. Thus, these

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customs,

customs, small in their beginning, as they encrease, promote business and traffick; and many depend on them for a living; but it is evident, that all business, which hath not its foundation in true wisdom, is not becoming a faithful follower of Christ, who loves God, not only with all his heart, but with all his strength, and ability. And as the Lord is able, and will support those, whose hearts are perfect towards him, in a way agreeably to his unerring wisdom, it becomes us to meditate on the privileges of his children, to remember, that where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, and that in joining to customs, which we know are wrong, there

there is a departing from his government, and a certain degree of alienation from him. To lay aside curious and costly attire, and use that only which is serviceable, to cease from all superfluities, and too much strong drink, is agreeable to the directions of our blessed Redeemer; and if in the integrity of our hearts, we do so, we in some degree contribute towards lessening that business which hath its foundation in a wrong spirit: and, as some well inclined people are entangled in such business, and at times have a desire of being freed from it; our ceasing from these things may be made helpful to them; and though for a time, their business may fail;

yet, if they humbly ask wisdom of God, and are truly resigned to him, he will not fail them, nor forsake them.

He who created the earth, and hath provided sustenance for millions of people in past ages, is now as attentive to the necessities of his children as ever. To press forward toward perfection is our duty; and if, herein, we lessen some business, by which some poor people earn their bread, the Lord, who calls to cease from those things, will take care of those whose business fails by it, if they sincerely seek to him.

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If the connection we have with the inhabitants of these provinces, and our interest, considered as distinct from others, engage us to promote plain living, in order to enrich our country; though a plain life is in itself best; yet by living plain in a selfish spirit, we advance not forward in true religion.

Divine Love, which enlarges the heart toward mankind universally, is that alone, which stops every corrupt stream, and opens those channels of business and commerce, where nothing runs that is not pure; and so establishes our goings, that when, in our labours, we meditate on the uni-

versal love of God, and the harmony of Holy Angels, the serenity of our minds may never be clouded, in remembering that some part of our employments, tends to support customs, which have their foundation in the self seeking spirit.

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

While our minds are prepossessed in favour of customs, distinguishable from perfect purity, we are in danger of not attending with singleness, to that light which opens to our view, the nature of universal righteousness.

In the affairs of a thick settled country, are variety of useful employments, besides tilling the earth; so that, for some men to have more land than is necessary to build upon, and to answer the occasions relative to their families, may consist

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with

with brotherhood; and from the various gifts which God hath bestowed, on those employed in husbandry, for some to possess and occupy much more than others, may likewise; but where any, on the strength of their possessions, demand such rent or interest, as necessitates those who take of them, to a closer application to business than our merciful father designed for us; this puts the wheels of perfect brotherhood out of order, and leads to employments, the promoting of which belongs not to the family of Christ, whose example in all parts, being a pattern of wisdom; the plainness and simplicity of his outward appearance, may well make us
 ashamed

ashamed, to adorn our bodies with costly array, or treasure up wealth by the least oppression.

The soil yields us support, and is profitable for man, and though some possessing a larger share of these profits than others, may consist with the harmony of true brotherhood; yet, that the poorest people, who are honest, are so long as they remain inhabitants of the earth, entitled to a certain portion of those profits, in as clear and as absolute a sense as those who inherit much, I believe will be agreed to, by those, whose hearts are enlarged with universal love. The first people who inhabited the earth, were

the first who had possession of the soil; the gracious Creator and owner of it, gave the fruits thereof for their use: and, as one generation passed away, another came and took possession; and thus through many ages, innumerable multitudes of people have been supplied by the fruits of the earth; but our gracious Creator is as absolutely the owner of it, as he was, when he first formed it out of nothing. And though by claims grounded on prior possession, great inequality appears amongst men; yet the instructions of the great proprietor of the earth, are necessary to be attended to in all our proceedings; as possessors or claimers of the soil.

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“The steps, of a good man are ordered of the Lord,” and those who are thus guided, whose hearts are enlarged in his love, give directions concerning their possessions agreeably thereto; and that claim, which stands on universal righteousness, is a good right; but the continuance of that right, depends on properly applying the profits thereof. The word right; is commonly used relative to our possessions: We say, a right of propriety to such a dividend of a province, or a clear indisputable right to the land within such certain bounds. Thus, this word is continued as a remembrancer of the original intent of dividing the land by boundaries,
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and implies; that it was equitably or rightly divided, that is, divided according to righteousness. In this, that is, in equity and righteousness, consists the strength of our claim. If we trace an unrighteous claim, and find gifts or grants to be proved by sufficient seals and witnesses; this gives not the claimant a right, for that which is opposite to righteousness, is wrong, and the nature of it must be changed, before it can be right.

Suppose twenty free men, professed followers of Christ, discovered an island unknown to all other people, and that they with their wives, independant
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of all others, took possession of it, and divided it equally; made improvements, and multiplied; suppose these first possessors, being generally influenced by true love, did with paternal regard, look over the increasing condition of the inhabitants, and near the end of their lives, gave such directions concerning their respective possessions, as best suited the convenience of the whole, and tended to preserve love and harmony; and that their successors in the continued increase of people, generally followed their pious example, and pursued means, the most effectual to keep oppression out of their island; but that one of these first settlers

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from a fond attachment to one of his numerous sons, no more deserving than the rest, gives the chief of his lands to him; and by an instrument sufficiently witnessed, strongly expressed his mind and will.

Suppose this son, being landlord to his brethren and nephews, demands such a portion of the fruits of the earth, as may supply him, and his family and some others, and that those others, thus supplied out of his store, are employed in adorning his building, with curious engravings and paintings, preparing carriages to ride in, vessels for his house, delicious meats,

fine

fine wrought apparel and furniture, all suiting that distinction lately arisen between him and the other inhabitants; and, that having the absolute disposal of these numerous improvements, his power so encreaseth, that in all conferences relative to the public affairs of the island, these plain, honest men, who are zealous for equitable establishments, find great difficulty in proceeding agreeably to their righteous inclinations.

Suppose he, from a fondness of one of his sons, joined with a desire to continue this grandeur under his own name, confirms chief of his possessions

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to him, and thus, for many ages over near a twentieth part of this island, there is one great landlord, and the rest, poor oppressed people; to some of whom, from the manner of their education, joined with a notion of the greatness of their predecessors, labour is disagreeable; who therefore, by artful applications to the weakness, unguardedness and corruptions of others, in striving to get a living out of them, encrease the difficulties amongst them, while the inhabitants of other parts, who guard against oppression, and, with one consent, train up their children in frugality and useful labour, live more harmoniously.

ously. If we trace the claims of the ninth or tenth of these great landlords, down to the first possessor, and find the claim supported throughout by instruments strongly drawn and witnessed; after all, we could not admit a belief into our hearts, that he had a right to so great a portion of land, after such a numerous increase of inhabitants.

The first possessor, of that twentieth part, held no more, we suppose, than an equitable portion, but when the Lord, who first gave these twenty men possession of this Island, unknown to all others, gave being to numerous

numerous people; who inhabited the twentieth part, whose natures required the fruits thereof for their sustenance, this great claimer of the soil, could not have a right to the whole, to dispose of it in gratifying his irregular desires; but they, as creatures of the most high God, possessor of Heaven and earth, had a right to part of what this great claimer held, though they had no instruments to confirm their right: Thus oppression in the extreme, appears terrible; but oppression, in more refined appearances, remains to be oppression, and where the smallest degree of it is cherished, it grows stronger and more extensive.

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To labour for a perfect redemption, from this spirit of oppression, is the great business of the whole family of Christ Jesus, in this world.

JOHN WOOLMAN.

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